

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims.

1. (Previously Presented) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least first and second seats supported by the frame in a side-by-side arrangement, a plurality of wheels arranged to support the frame, an internal combustion engine disposed between the first and second seats and having a crankshaft configured to rotate, a transmission arranged to transmit the rotation of the crankshaft to at least one of the wheels, and a housing configured to house at least a portion of the transmission, the housing having an air inlet duct through which ambient air enters the housing and flows across the portion of the transmission and an air outlet duct through which the air leaves the housing, the air inlet duct having an inlet opening, the outlet duct having an outlet opening, the inlet and outlet openings positioned higher than the wheels.

2. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the first seat comprises a seat surface onto which a driver or passenger of the vehicle sits, the seat surface positioned higher than the wheels, and the outlet opening being positioned at an elevation close to an elevation of the seat surface.

3. (Withdrawn) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the outlet opening is faces rearward.

4. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the first seat comprises a seat surface onto which a driver or passenger of the vehicle sits, the seat surface positioned higher than the wheels, and a portion of the outlet duct extending next to the first seat.

5. (Withdrawn) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 4, wherein the portion of the outlet duct that extends next to the seat is an uppermost section of outlet duct.

6. (Withdrawn) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 4, wherein the seat has a slant surface, and the portion of outlet duct has a configuration that corresponds to the slant surface such that the seat and the portion of the outlet duct generally nest together.

7. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 4, wherein another portion of the outlet duct extends upwardly along at least a front section of the housing at a location not more than just forward of the first seat.

8. (Previously Presented) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, a plurality of wheels arranged to support the frame, an internal combustion engine having a crankshaft configured to rotate, a transmission arranged to transmit the rotation of the crankshaft to at least one of the wheels, and a housing configured to house at least a portion of the transmission, the housing having an air inlet duct through which ambient air enters the housing and an air outlet duct through which the air leaves the housing, the air inlet duct having an inlet opening, the outlet duct having an outlet opening, the inlet and outlet openings positioned higher than the wheels, and at least two seat assemblies disposed side by side on the frame, and the outlet duct having a portion extending between the seat assemblies.

9. (Withdrawn) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 8, wherein the outlet opening is directed rearward.

10. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 8, wherein each one of the seat assemblies comprises a seat and a pedestal configured to support the seat, the portion of the outlet duct extends along one of the seats and has a configuration corresponding to a configuration of the seat.

11. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 8, wherein the housing at least in part is positioned between the seat assemblies.

12. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the first seat comprises a surface on which a driver or passenger of the vehicle sits, the surface being positioned higher than the wheels, and the inlet opening being positioned at generally the same elevation as the surface or at a location higher than the surface.

13. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the inlet opening is positioned at a location generally behind the first seat.

14. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the first seat defines a surface on which a driver or passenger of the vehicle sits, the first seat including a seat back against which the driver or passenger leans, the seat back having a top, the inlet opening of the air inlet duct being positioned at a location higher than the surface and lower than the top of the seat back.

15. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the air inlet duct at least in part is positioned between the first and second seats.

16. (Previously presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the inlet opening faces forward.

17. (Withdrawn) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the inlet opening is faces rearward.

18. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the transmission comprises a belt-transmission mechanism, and the housing houses the belt-transmission mechanism.

19. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the belt transmission mechanism includes a drive pulley coupled to the crankshaft, an output shaft, a driven pulley coupled to the output shaft, and a belt extending around the drive and driven pulleys.

20. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least one of the inlet and outlet ducts is a member formed separately from the housing and is coupled to the housing.

21. (Previously Presented) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least first and second seats supported by the frame in a side-by-side manner, a plurality of wheels arranged to support the frame, an internal combustion engine having a crankshaft configured to rotate, a transmission arranged to transmit the rotation of the crankshaft to at least one of the wheels, a housing configured to define a chamber around at least a portion of the transmission, and means for introducing ambient air into the chamber and discharging the air from the chamber and for inhibiting water from entering the chamber.

22. (Previously Presented) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, a plurality of wheels arranged to support the frame, an internal combustion engine having a crankshaft configured to rotate, a transmission arranged to transmit the rotation of the crankshaft to at least one of the wheels, a housing configured to house at least a portion of the transmission, the housing having an air inlet duct through which ambient air enters the housing and flows across the portion of the transmission and an air outlet duct through which the air leaves the housing, the air inlet duct having an inlet opening, the air outlet duct having an outlet opening, and a seat defining a sitting surface on which a driver or passenger of the vehicle sits, the inlet opening being positioned at generally the same elevation as or higher than the sitting surface, the outlet opening being positioned generally close to the elevation of the sitting surface.

23. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 23, wherein the sitting surface is positioned higher than the wheels.

24. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the air outlet duct extends at about the same height as a cylinder of the engine.

25. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the air outlet duct overlaps with a portion of at least one of the first and second seats, as viewed in a plan view.

26. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the air outlet duct extends over the chamber.

27. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the air inlet duct overlaps with a cylinder block of the engine, when viewed in a side elevational view.

28. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the inlet and outlet openings are disposed higher than the housing.

29. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the air inlet duct is positioned lower than the upper most surface of the wheels.

30. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 21, wherein at least a portion of the air outlet duct extends at about the same height as a cylinder of the engine.

31. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 21, wherein at least a portion of the air outlet duct overlaps with a portion of at least one of the first and second seats, as viewed in a plan view.

32. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 21, wherein at least a portion of the air outlet duct extends over the chamber.

33. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 21, wherein at least a portion of the air inlet duct overlaps with a cylinder block of the engine, when viewed in a side elevational view.

34. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 21, wherein the inlet and outlet openings are disposed higher than the chamber.

35. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 21, wherein at least a portion of the air inlet duct is positioned lower than the upper most surface of the wheels.

36. (Previously Presented) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least a first seat supported by the frame, a plurality of wheels arranged to support the frame, an internal combustion engine having a crankshaft configured to rotate, a transmission arranged to transmit the rotation of the crankshaft to at least one of the wheels, and a housing configured to house at least a portion of the transmission, the housing having an air inlet duct through which ambient air enters the housing and an air outlet duct through which the air leaves the housing, the air inlet duct having an inlet opening, the outlet duct having an outlet opening, the inlet and outlet openings positioned higher than the wheels, and wherein at least a portion of the outlet duct is disposed under the seat.

37. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 36, wherein the outlet duct extends upwardly from a forward portion of the transmission, then rearwardly over the housing and below the seat.

38. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 37, wherein an outlet end of the outlet duct is disposed rearward of a forward-most edge of the seat.

39. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 36, wherein an upstream portion of the outlet duct has a first cross-sectional shape and a down stream portion of the outlet duct that is disposed below the seat has a second cross-sectional shape different from the first cross-sectional shape.

40. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 39, wherein the second cross sectional shape is larger in a horizontal dimension than that of the first cross-sectional shape.

41. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 36, wherein an upstream portion of the outlet duct is disposed forward of the forward-most edge of the seat and a downstream portion of the outlet duct is disposed rearwardly from the forward-most edge of the seat.

42. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 36, wherein the inlet and outlet ducts are arranged to guide atmospheric air through the inlet duct and into the housing such that the atmospheric air passes over and thereby cools the portion of the transmission and then exits the housing through the outlet duct.

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43. (Previously Presented) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 42 additionally comprising at least a second seat in a side-by-side arrangement with the first seat, the engine being disposed between the first and second seats.